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Gurney - Declaration - 1847

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DECLARATION,

BY THE LATE

JOSEPH JOHN GURNEY,

OF

HIS FAITH

RESPECTING

SEVERAL POINTS OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.

BOSTON:

PRINTED BY S. N. DICKINSON & CO.

1847.

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28 Jan. 1893

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INTRODUCTION.

THE statement by the late JOSEPH JOHN GURNEY, of Earham, near Norwich, England, of his Christian faith, which will be found in the following pages, was made by him under the following circumstances.

A controversy in the law arose between two bodies, each claiming the character of the same monthly meeting of the Society of Friends, respecting the possession of a Friends' meeting-house.

In the course of this controversy, equity proceedings were had; and in the answer of one of the parties to a bill in chancery, filed by the other party, certain allegations were made respecting the religious opinions of Joseph John Gurney.

After the filing and printing of this answer, thus bringing into the controversy the belief of this eminent man, although religious doctrines had had no connection with the case, he was asked if it would be consistent with his views of propriety and religious duty, to give his testimony, in such form as could be used in legal proceedings, of his belief in the particulars respecting which the allegations had been made.

The declaration which follows was furnished by him, in answer to this application. The subjects of the "Sabbath" and the "Resurrection" were not mentioned in the proceedings in chancery, and the explanation of his belief respecting them was added, for reasons assigned by himself.

The legal form of the declaration is retained, because it seems desirable to give it publicity, in the form in which it was furnished by him.

It is now published, that all interested may have the opportunity of seeing the statement of Joseph John Gurney's religious views on important Christian doctrines, from his own pen, after the allegations which have been made by others respecting many of them had assumed a tangible form; and in the hope that it may have a healing effect upon existing differences of opinion in the Society of Friends, and tend to promote Christian harmony and fellowship.

EARLHAM NEAR NORWICH,
7th Month 26th, 1846.

HAVING been requested by my friend Stephen A. Chase, of Salem, Massachussets, to furnish him with a statement of my Christian faith, respecting the Holy Scriptures, the immediate and perceptible operation of the Spirit, the doctrine of justification, and that of the Trinity, (as it is called,) I have much satisfaction in complying with his request.

I. THE HOLY SCRIPTURES. My belief respecting the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament may be stated in the words of GEORGE FOX; "Concerning the Holy Scriptures, we believe they were given forth by the Holy Spirit of God through the holy men of God, who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost: we believe they are to be read, believed, and fulfilled, (he that fulfils them is Christ;) and they are profitable for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works; and are able to make wise unto salvation, through faith in Christ Jesus: we believe the Holy Scriptures are the words of God."

See Declaration of Faith issued by George Fox and others, and presented to the Governor and Council of Barbadoes.—Evans' Exposition, p. 238.

Also in the words of ROBERT BARCLAY; "Moreover because they are commonly acknowledged by all to have been written by the dictates of the Holy Spirit, and that the errors which may be supposed by the in-

jury of times to have slipped in, (*) are not such but that there is a sufficient clear testimony left to all the essentials of the Christian faith, we do look upon them as the only fit outward judge of controversies among Christians, and that whatsoever doctrine is contrary unto their testimony, may therefore be rejected as false. And for our parts, we are very willing that all our doctrines and practices be tried by them, which we never refused, and never shall in all controversies with our adversaries, *as the judge and test*. We shall also be very willing to admit it as a positive certain maxim, that whatsoever any do, pretending to the Spirit, which is contrary to the Scriptures, be accounted and reckoned a delusion of the devil." *Apology, Prop. III.*

Also in the words of WILLIAM PENN, "We both love, honour, and prefer them before all books in the world; ever choosing to express our belief of the Christian faith and doctrine in the terms thereof, and rejecting all principles and doctrines whatsoever, that are repugnant thereto."—*Testimony to the Truth, Evans*, p. 248.

Also in the words of the General Epistle of the YEARLY MEETING OF LONDON, for the year, 1836. "It has ever been, and still is, the belief of the Society of Friends, that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, were given by inspiration of God: that therefore the declarations contained in them rest on the authority of God himself; and there can be no appeal, from them, to any other authority whatsoever; that they are able to make us wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus, being the appointed means of making known to us the blessed truths of Christianity; that they are the only divinely authorized record of the

* The errors here alluded to, are those of copying only, which have given rise, as is generally known, to a great number of various readings. These for the most part, are entirely destitute of importance. After a very extensive and accurate collation of manuscripts and other authorities, the text both of the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures may now be regarded as being, for all practical purposes, settled and ascertained; and the blessed result is that the readers of Holy Writ, are not deprived of a single moral principle, or a single doctrinal truth.

doctrines which we are bound, as Christians, to believe, and of the moral principles which are to regulate our actions; that no doctrine which is not contained in them can be required of any one to be believed, as an article of faith; that whatsoever any man says or does, which is contrary to the Scriptures, though under profession of the immediate guidance of the Spirit, must be reckoned and accounted a mere delusion.”*

While I fully agree with the plain testimony which has thus been always borne by Friends to the divine authority of the Holy Scriptures, and do sincerely acknowledge that the doctrines and precepts contained in them, are the doctrines and precepts of the Almighty himself, I also unite with Friends in objecting to the common practice of denominating the sacred volume “*the word of God*,” because I am of opinion that this epithet, considered as a distinguishing and exclusive title, properly belongs only to Christ of whom the Scriptures testify.

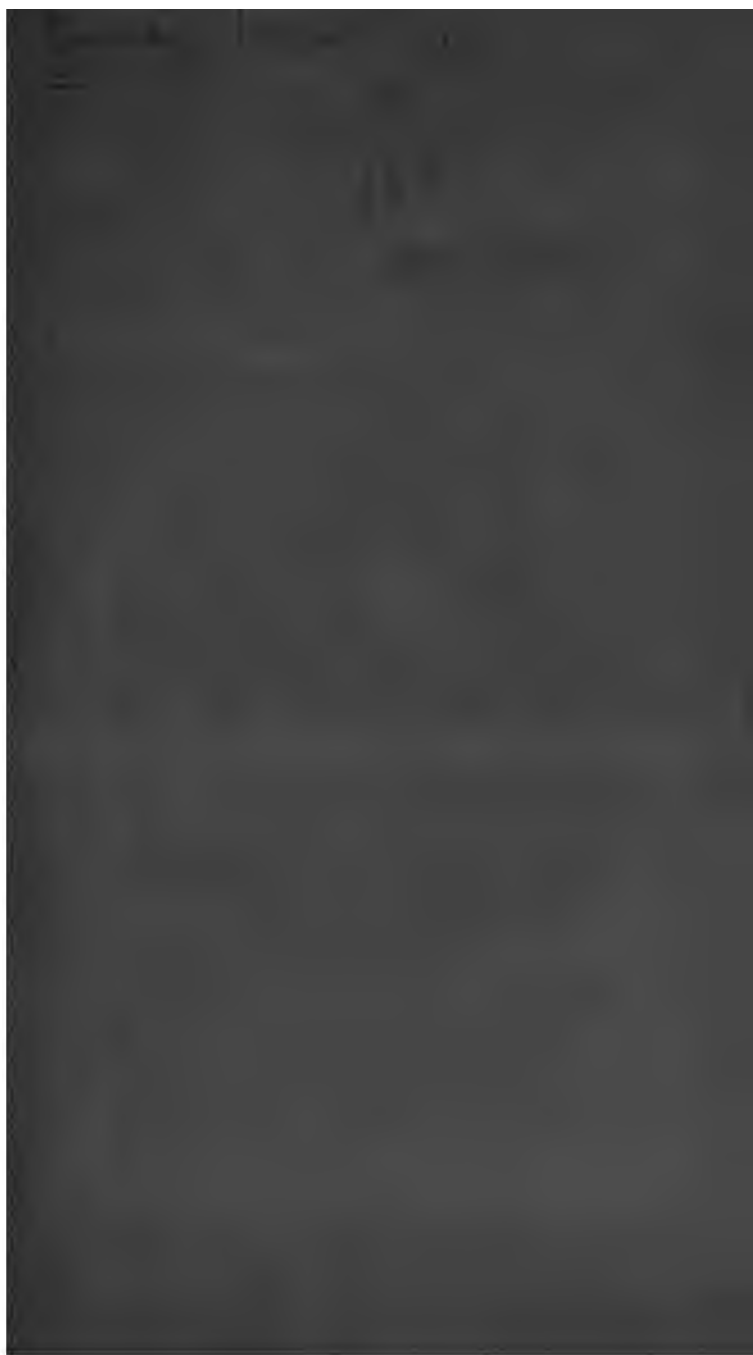
Secondly, I wish it to be clearly understood, that since the paramount authority of the Holy Scriptures over that of all other books, is a simple consequence of the fact, that they were given by inspiration of God, I must ever regard these sacred writings, pure and precious though they be, as entirely subordinate, in point of dignity and power, to the Holy Spirit from whom they came, and who is himself their true and ever living Author. And further, though they are “the appointed means of making known to us the blessed truths of Christianity,” and thus “are able to make us wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus,” I entertain a deep and thorough conviction, that they can never impart an efficacious and saving knowledge of divine things, unless their contents are unfolded to the understanding, and impressed on the heart, by the immediate influences of that Spirit from whom they emanated. While, therefore, it is our un-

* This epistle was, as I understand, republished by most of the yearly meetings of North America.

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DECLARATION,

BY THE LATE

JOSEPH JOHN GURNEY,

OF

HIS FAITH

RESPECTING

SEVERAL POINTS OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.

BOSTON:

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prostration of soul before the Lord, that patient waiting upon him, and that listening to the immediate teaching of his Spirit, which are essential to a real growth in grace, and to the solid formation of the Christian character. Nor ought such a practice to be confined to public occasions, for "it is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth ; he *sitteth alone and keepeth silence* because he hath borne it upon him ; he putteth his mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope : " Lam. iii, 27 — 29. Comp. *Robert Barclay on Immediate Revelation, universal and saving light, worship and ministry, Apology, Prop. ii. vi. x. xi.*

III. JUSTIFICATION.

By this term I understand the forgiveness and acceptance, with God, of the penitent sinner, for the sake and through the mediation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and through faith in his blood. This is a doctrine absolutely fundamental and essential in Christianity, and has always been steadily maintained by the Society of Friends. It ought, however, to be inseparably associated in our minds, with the equally important truth that "without holiness no man can see the Lord," and that we cannot avail ourselves of the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, unless, being born again of the Spirit, we heartily repent of our sins, resolutely forsake and renounce them, and humbly endeavour, through divine aid, to walk in the light. "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit : " Rom. viii, 1. "If we walk in the light as God is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin : " 1 John ii, 7.

I can most freely subscribe to the following declarations made by the Society of Friends as a body, and by some of its most eminent members, on this cardinal and vital topic.

"Christ gave himself, his body, for the life of the whole world, and paid the debt and made satisfaction, and doth enlighten every man that comes into the world, that all through him might believe; and *he that doth not believe in the offering is condemned already.*" —George Fox—*Great Mystery*, p. 63. *Evans*, p. 29.

"Christ Jesus the Emmanuel, God with us; whom all the angels must worship. Christ offered himself through the eternal Spirit without spot to God, and by his blood purges our consciences from dead works to serve the living God. And so we know that Christ, by one offering, for ever perfected them that are sanctified. And so as people walk in the light, they have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Christ cleanseth them from all sin. And Christ his own self bare our sins in his body on the tree, that we being delivered from sin should live unto righteousness—by whose stripes you are healed. And we *being justified by the blood of Christ*, shall be saved from wrath through him; for if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."—*Epistle issued by the Society in 1688: Evans*, p. p. 29, 30.

"This Jesus who was the Foundation of the holy prophets and apostles, is our Foundation; and we believe there is no other foundation to be laid, but that which is laid, even Christ Jesus, who tasted death for every man, shed his blood for all men, is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world, according as John the Baptist testified of him, when he said, 'Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.'"—*Letter from George Fox to the Council and Government of Barbadoes: Evans*, p. 32.

"We do not hereby intend" (that is by enforcing the necessity of obedience to the Holy Spirit) "any ways to lessen or derogate from the atonement and sacrifice of Jesus Christ; but, on the contrary, do magnify and exalt it. For as we believe all those things to

have been certainly transacted which are recorded in the Holy Scriptures concerning the birth, life, miracles, sufferings, resurrection, and ascension of Christ; so we also believe that it is the duty of every one to believe it, to whom it pleases God to reveal the same; yea, we believe *it were damnable unbelief not to believe it when so declared*, but to resist that holy seed, which as minded, would lead and incline every one to believe it, as it is offered unto them." *Robert Barclay's Apology, Evans, p. 43.*

Again, "As we believe it was necessary that Christ should come, that by his death and sufferings he might offer up himself a sacrifice to God for our sins, who, his own self, bare our sins in his own body on the tree, so we believe that the remission of sins, which any partake of, is only in and by virtue of that most satisfactory sacrifice, and no otherwise."—*Idem.*

"In him (Christ) we have life, and by faith atonement in his blood."—*William Penn's Works: Evans, p. 49.*

"We are led by the light and spirit of Christ, with holy reverence to confess unto the blood of Christ shed at Jerusalem, as that by which a propitiation was held forth to the remission of the sins that were past, through the forbearance of God, unto all that believe."—*William Penn's Works, p. 411: Evans, p. 54.*

"We do own first that the Word of God, the only begotten of the Father, did take up a body of the flesh of the Virgin Mary, who was of the seed of David, according to the Scriptures, and did the will of the Father therein, in holy obedience unto him both in life and death.

"Secondly, That he did offer up the flesh and blood of that body; though not only so, for he poured out his soul, he poured out his life, a sacrifice or offering for sin, (do not, oh do not stumble at it, but rather wait on the Lord to understand it; for we speak in this matter what we know) a sacrifice unto the Father, and in it tasted death for every man, and that it is in con-

sideration and through God's acceptance of this sacrifice for sin, that the *sins of believers are pardoned*, that God might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus, or who is of the faith of Jesus."—*Isaac Pennington; Works: Evans, p. 87.*

"Question. Are you justified by that blood of Christ that was shed at Jerusalem?"

"Answer. *By the blood of Jesus Christ*, the Son of the living God who was the express image of the Father's glory, in whom dwelt the fulness of the God-head really, who suffered at Mount Calvary, by Jerusalem, for sinners, *am I justified.*"—*Humfrey Smith: Evans, p. 94.*

RICHARD CLARIDGE, like some other writers of our Society, has treated on *Justification* as consisting of two parts; first, the forgiveness of the penitent sinner through faith in Christ crucified, and secondly, purification from sin by the power of the Holy Ghost. For my own part I am accustomed to describe the latter by the term "*Sanctification.*" Nevertheless, I am one with him in his Christian doctrine. "By the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ, without us," says he, "we, *truly repenting and believing*, are, through the mercy of God, *justified from the imputation of sins and transgressions that are past, as though they had never been committed*: and by the mighty work of Christ within us, the power, habits, and nature of sin are destroyed; that as sin once reigned unto death, even so now grace reigneth unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord; and all this is effected, not by a bare or naked act of faith, separate from obedience, but in the obedience of faith; Christ being the author of eternal salvation to none but those who obey him."—*On Justification, p. 79.*

"We do, indeed, renounce the profession of justification by the imputation of Christ, or his righteousness performed without men, by men while they are in the degenerated estate, and unconverted and unreconciled, and unborn again; for by such profession of justifica-

tion, many deceive their souls. But yet we say that righteousness is *imputed to us, and reckoned unto us, who believe in Christ, and have received him*; even the obedience and sufferings that he performed without us are ours who have received him within us, and therefore we are not reprobates; yet we do acknowledge that he wrought perfect righteousness by obedience and sufferings, and *that righteousness is ours by faith.*" — *Edward Burrough, "Satan's Design Defeated;" Evans, p. 99.*

A safer or more satisfactory declaration than this of the true doctrine of justification by faith, as it is held by every sound Christian, cannot surely be required by the most ardent advocate of evangelical truth. Those who accuse the early members of our religious Society of unsoundness in Christian doctrine, are little aware how remarkably they were distinguished by a firm unbending faith in Christ as the Saviour of the world, and by that ardent love for him, which constrained them to devote themselves to his service, and to follow him faithfully, through many and deep sufferings, even unto death. Conscientiously, do I affirm, that although I may have used terms somewhat different from those which some of them employed, and have occasionally taken a different view of particular passages of Scripture, we have advocated one and the same precious truth — even the "Truth as it is in Jesus." Most willing were they at all times to confess — as the Society has frequently done in its corporate capacity — that Jesus Christ in all his gracious offices is the only Foundation which can be laid in Zion; that all our hopes of salvation are in Him; that it is through his perfect obedience, and propitiatory offering on the cross, that we poor sinners receive the forgiveness of our sins, and are placed in possession of a well-founded hope, full of immortality — and that a living faith in Him is the appointed means by which we are made partakers of these free mercies of God our Father. By this faith did our forefathers in the truth spiritually *eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood*; and being richly

favorable with this inward experience, they neither required nor admitted any outward ceremony in divine worship, to remind them of the death of their Lord.

Equally willing have I always been, and still am, to acknowledge that (as they frequently declared, and as the Society itself has never failed to testify) we cannot truly come unto Christ, except the Father who hath sent him draw us — that the influence by which the Father draws us to the Son is that of the Holy Spirit, who convinces of sin, bestows true repentance, and lays the sinner prostrate at the feet of the Saviour; and finally, that except we be thoroughly cleansed from our iniquities by the baptism which saves — even the ONE baptism of Christianity, which is with the Holy Ghost — and thus become new creatures in Christ Jesus, we can never obtain that glorious inheritance which the Saviour has purchased for us with his own blood.

The following extract from a declaration of faith, issued by the YEARLY MEETING OF PHILADELPHIA, in 1828, (the time of the Hicksite separation) is so clearly to the point and so excellent, that I think it right to subjoin it to the quotations already given. "We believe that nothing man can do, or suffer, will atone for, or cancel his sins. They are remitted by the mercy of God, through Christ Jesus our Lord, for the sake of the sufferings and death of Christ, and it is the power and efficacy of that propitiatory offering, *upon faith and repentance*, that justifies both Jews and Gentiles from the sins that are past; and it is the power of Christ's spirit in our hearts, that purifies and makes us acceptable before God; "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare I say at this time his righteousness; that he might be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus," Rom. iii. 24 — 26. "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners

Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ by whom we have now received the atonement," Rom. v, 8—11.

"Not only do the Separatists deny the universal efficacy of the offering of our Lord, and term the imputation of his righteousness as the ground of our acceptance, a pernicious and absurd idea, but they appear to rejoice in the hope, that the doctrine will be discarded, as the fruit of the apostacy from the Christian faith. Believing as we do, that it is only as we come to be divested of our own righteousness, and of all confidence in it, and through divine mercy clothed upon with the righteousness of Christ, that any can have a firm ground whereon to rest their hope of salvation, we sincerely deplore the delusion of those, who thus wantonly deprive themselves of that hope, which maketh not ashamed, and entereth within the veil."

IV. THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY.

I have never thought it right, either in preaching or writing, to make use of this term, which is scholastic in its origin, and is liable to misconstruction; but I consider the doctrine itself, though far beyond the reach of the natural understanding of man, to be plainly set forth in Scripture; and so far am I from regarding it as merely theoretical in its nature, that I accept it as of the highest practical importance in the experience of every true believer.

No one who has an experimental knowledge of the great plan of redemption, and calmly reflects on its several features, can fail to perceive that the proper divinity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, is one

of those amazing truths which impart a living efficacy to the whole; for while he offered up himself on the cross as man, yet was he omnipotent, *because of his deity*, to bear the weight of the sins of all mankind, and just in proportion to the supreme dignity of the sufferer, is the comprehensiveness of the hope and joy which we derive from his sufferings. "He that spared not **HIS OWN SON**, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Rom. viii, 32. Again, where is the individual convinced of the truth, *as Friends have ever held it*, who will not allow that it is in virtue of his glorious God-head, that Christ governs his universal church by the immediate influences of his Spirit; and that he is by the same Spirit, "the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world?"

It would be irrelevant for me here to adduce the clear and frequently repeated testimony of Scripture to the deity of Christ. Suffice it to say, that this testimony was accepted and promulgated without reserve by our earliest predecessors in the truth, and has always been maintained inviolate by the Society of Friends, to the present day. Nor has the faith of our religious body been less scriptural, or less explicitly declared, respecting the divinity of the Holy Spirit; for where is the sound believer, who does not acknowledge that the Comforter, even the Holy Ghost, whom the Father sends to us in the name of the Son, to dwell with us and in us, and to guide us into all truth, (John xiv, 17, and xvi, 13;) against whom it is an unpardonable sin to blaspheme; (Mark iii, 29;) into whose name the true convert is baptized, as well as into the name of the Father, and of the Son; (Matt. xxviii, 19;) who divideth to every man severally in the Church, "*as he will*," (1 Cor. xii, 11,) is himself truly and properly God? Yet, although the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, are all three presented to us in Scripture as actually divine, and as severally distinguished by relative properties, in the economy of grace — it is still

the same mind, the same power, the same essence. The whole Scripture assures us, that there is but one God — even the immutable and everlasting Jehovah — and, therefore, these Three are One. And here I wish it to be distinctly understood, that when in any of my writings I have adverted to the “personality,” or “personal attributes” of the Holy Spirit, I have had no intention whatsoever to convey the idea that the Comforter possesses a personal form; much less to represent him, as an object of worship, separate from God; but only to show, that so far from being a mere influence, he must be regarded as a divine intelligent Agent, truly ONE with the Father and the Son.

My belief on the subject cannot be better expressed than in the following declarations of the early members of our religious Society:—

“We believe concerning the Father, Son, and Spirit, according to the testimony of the Holy Scriptures, which we receive and embrace as the most authentic and perfect declaration of Christian faith, being indited by the Holy Spirit of God, that never errs; 1st. That there is one God and Father, of whom are all things; 2nd. That there is one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom all things were made, who was glorified of the Father before the world began, who is God over all, blessed for ever. 3rd. That there is one Holy Spirit, the promise of the Father and the Son, the leader, sanctifier, and comforter of his people. And we further believe, as the Holy Scriptures soundly and sufficiently express, that these three are ONE — even the Father, the Word, and the Spirit.” — *George Fox's Answer to all such as falsely say the Quakers are no Christians*, pp. 26, 27: *Evans*, p. 3.

“So being led by the Spirit of God, ye are his sons and daughters, and, by his Spirit, will come to know the Three that bear witness in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost. These are the THREE WITNESSES that are in heaven, that bear record of all things; for He is God in the heaven, and God in the earth.” — *George Fox's Epistles*: *Evans*, p. 3.

"There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these Three are One. The Father is in the Son, and the Son is in the Father. No man knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. The Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God. For the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now the saints have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that they might know the things which are freely given to them of God. For the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father sends in *Christ's* name, He teacheth them all things, and bringeth all things to their remembrance."—*Robert Barclay's Confession of Faith*, p. 104 : *Evans*, p. 5.

"Perversion 9. The Quakers deny the Trinity. Principle — Nothing less. They believe in the Holy Three, or Trinity of Father, Word, and Spirit, according to Scripture, and that these Three are truly and properly One — of one nature as well as will." — *William Penn's Key, &c.* : *Evans*, p. 7.

"The Holy Scripture Trinity, or Three thereby meant, we never questioned, but believed ; as also the unity of essence ; that they are one substance, one divine, infinite Being ; and also we question not but sincerely believe the *relative properties* of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, according to Holy Scripture testimony, and that these Three are One." — *George Whitehead*, p. 195 : *Evans*, p. 8.

"Now consider seriously, if a man from his heart believe thus concerning the eternal power and Godhead, that the Father is God, the Word, God, the Holy Spirit, God ; and that these are one eternal God, waiting so to know God, and to be subject to him accordingly ; is not this man in a right frame of heart towards the Lord in this respect ? Indeed, friends, we do know God sensibly and experimentally, to be a Father,

Word, and Spirit, and we worship the Father, in the Son, by his own Spirit, and here meet with the seal of acceptance in Him." — *Isaac Pennington's Antichrist Unmasked*, p. 27 : *Evans*, p. 10.

To these explicit testimonies, given forth on behalf of the body, by eminent individuals, may be added the following declaration solemnly made by the Society, A.D. 1693: —

"We sincerely profess faith in God by his only begotten Son Jesus Christ, as being our light and life, our only way to the Father, and also our only Mediator and Advocate with the Father.

"That God created all things; he made the world by his Son Jesus Christ, he being that powerful and living Word by whom all things were made; and that the Father, the Word, and Holy Spirit are one: in Divine Being inseparable; one true, living, and eternal God blessed for ever." *Signed on behalf of our Christian profession and people aforesaid — George Whitehead, Ambrose Rigg, &c., &c. . . . Sewel's History*, vol. ii, p. 499.

Under the full conviction that this is a subject above all others, on which it were very foolishness to attempt to be wise above that which is written, and under a solemn sense of the importance of our faithfully adhering to the doctrine of the *Oneness* of Jehovah, I will now conclude my declaration of faith, on this grand, essential article, in words which I have already published. They were suggested to me, many years ago, by a venerable minister of the gospel, who dearly loved our religious Society, and faithfully adhered to its acknowledged principles to his dying day.

"While the Christian rejoices in the distinct characters and offices of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, so graciously revealed to us for our instruction and edification, he probably never finds his soul bowed down with so deep a reverence, or filled with so pure a delight, as when he contemplates the Almighty as an

ineffable glory — an incommunicable name — an infinite and incomprehensible UNITY.”

Although I have now given a full and explicit answer, as I trust, to the inquiry of my friend Stephen A. Chase, I am best satisfied to add a short explanation of my belief on two points which he has not mentioned — *the resurrection of the body, and the sabbath.*

My convictions on the former subject are well stated in the following sentences selected from the declaration of faith made by the Society of Friends in 1693, and already cited under a preceding head.

“Concerning the resurrection of the dead and the great day of judgment yet to come, beyond the grave, or after death, and Christ’s coming, without us, to judge the quick and the dead, what the Holy Scriptures plainly declare and testify in these matters, we have been always ready to embrace. *For the doctrine of the resurrection;* if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable : 1 Cor. xv, 19. We sincerely believe not only a resurrection in Christ from the fallen sinful state here, but a rising and ascending into glory with him hereafter; that when he at last appears, we may appear with him in glory : Col. iii, 4; 1 John iii, 2.

“But that all the wicked who live in rebellion against the light of grace, and die finally impenitent, shall come forth to the resurrection of condemnation.

“The soul or spirit of every man or woman shall be reserved in its own distinct and proper being, and shall have its proper body as God is pleased to give it: 1 Cor. xv. A natural body is sown, a spiritual body is raised; that being first which is natural, and afterwards that which is spiritual. And though it is said that this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality, the change shall be such as that “flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither shall corruption inherit incorrup-

tion:" 1 Cor. xv. We shall be raised out of all corruption and corruptibility, out of all mortality; and the children of God and of the resurrection shall be equal to the angels of God in heaven. And as the celestial bodies do far excel the terrestrial, so we expect our spiritual bodies in the resurrection shall far excel what our bodies now are." To which declaration may be added the words of JOHN CROOK. "We believe that we shall be raised with the *same bodies*, so far as natural and spiritual, corruptible and incorruptible, terrestrial and celestial can be the same." *Evans p. 114.*

Similar declarations were frequently made during the times when Friends were exposed to much controversy as well as persecution. On this subject, I have only to add that, while the testimony of Scripture to the resurrection of the dead, and a future day of general judgment, is both unquestionable and abundant, and was fully received and admitted by our early Friends, it may also be clearly proved from Scripture (as Friends have always maintained,) that the rational soul of man exists immediately after death either in happiness, or woe; and that it is only as we experience what it is to be raised from our death in trespasses and sins, and quickened into newness of life by the power of the Holy Ghost, that we can possibly be fitted for the awful change which awaits us all, from probation to retribution, and from a brief sojourn in this passing scene, to a fixed but boundless immortality.

With respect to the "sabbath," I wish it to be distinctly understood that in sometimes applying that term to the first day of the week, as it is observed among Christians, I have had a view to the simple meaning of the Hebrew word, viz. — "*cessation from labour.*" I am perfectly aware that the maintenance of the Jewish sabbath, observed as it was and is on the seventh day of the week, and with a ceremonial strictness which appertained only to the Mosaic law, is, under the gospel dispensation, no longer obligatory. And

while I am of the judgment that the setting apart of *one* day, after every recurring period of *six* days of labour, for the blessed purposes of rest and worship, is not to be regarded as a matter of mere expediency, but as a moral and religious duty, truly belonging to the law of our God, I fully unite in the sentiment expressed by Robert Barclay and others of our early friends, that no portion of time ought to be regarded by Christians as in itself holier than another — that all our time is the Lord's — and that ceasing from our own wicked works, and all the willing and running of the carnal mind, we must press forward after that glorious rest, (typified by the sabbath of the Jews) of which a precious foretaste is bestowed even here, and which is perfected, for the people of God, in the world to come.

Joseph John Gurney of Earham in the County of the city of Norwich, a minister of the gospel in the Society of Friends, on his solemn affirmation saith that the declaration contained in the foregoing part of this sheet, and printed in eight columns,* is a true and honest declaration of his Christian faith on the several articles therein stated; and that to the best of his knowledge and belief, he has held the same sentiments for more than thirty years.

J. J. GURNEY
of Earham near Norwich, England.

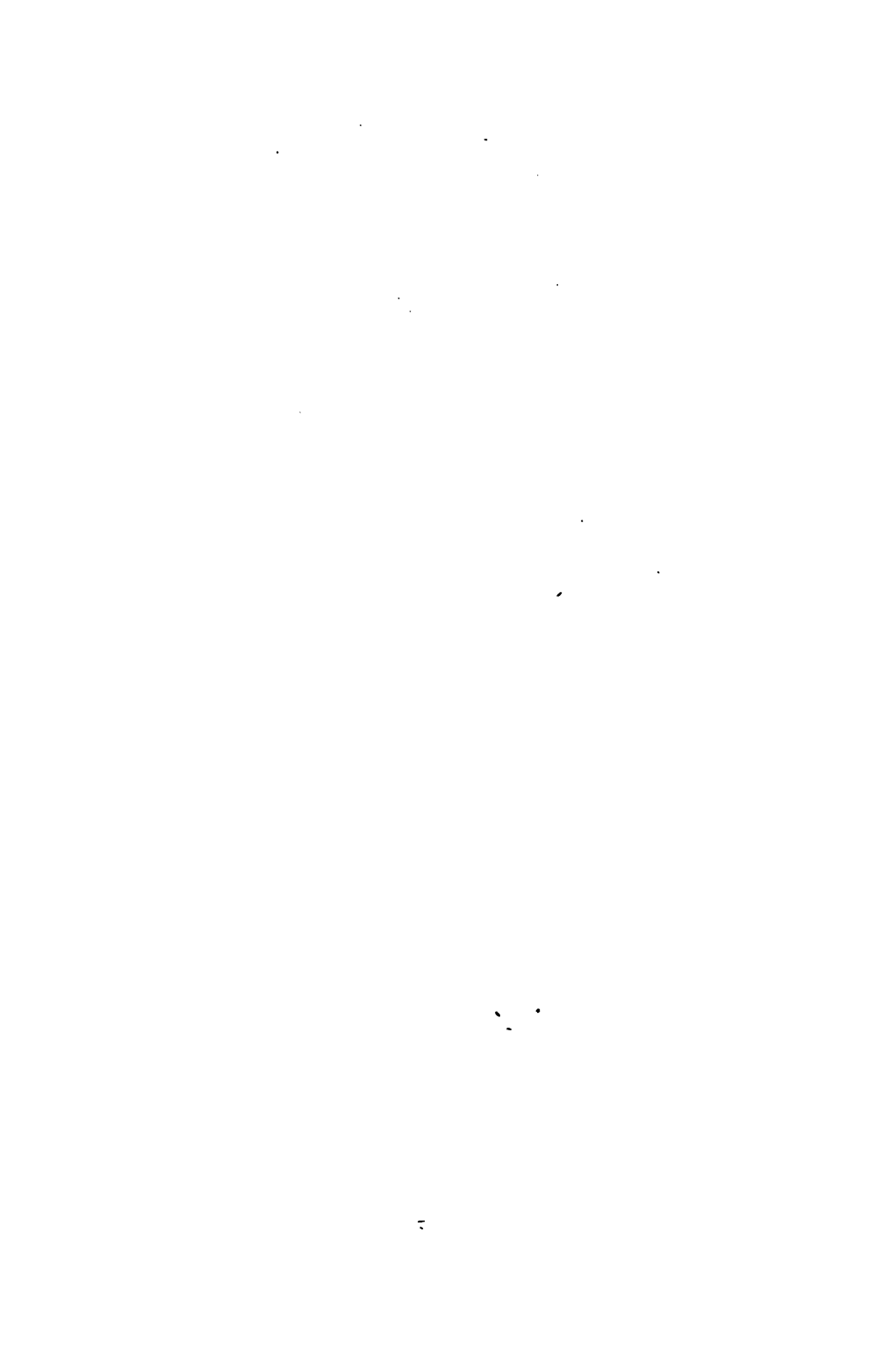
Declared and affirmed before us at the Guildhall in the City of Norwich the First day of August one thousand Eight hundred and forty-six.

JOHN BETTS Mayor of the City of Norwich and County of the same.

GEO. D. LYNN Justice of the Peace of the City of Norwich and County of the same.

J. H. BARNARD Justice of the Peace of the City of Norwich and County of the same.

* The original is printed on a large sheet, in eight columns; and the above certificates are written upon the same sheet. — S. A. C.



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